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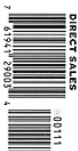
VERTIGO
#1



AMERICAN VAMPIRE



May '10
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VERTIGO

SCOTT SNYDER
RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
AND STEPHEN KING

AMERICAN VAMPIRE

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July, 1925. Thirty miles east of Los Angeles.

"I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD
THE FIRST TIME I SAW A
MOVING PICTURE.

"IT WAS MY BIRTHDAY. MY FATHER TOOK
ME TO TOPEKA FOR THE AFTERNOON.

"THERE WAS A GENERAL STORE NEAR THE
RAILROAD THAT HAD ONE OF THOSE LONG,
WINDING CANDY COUNTERS.

"MY FATHER GAVE
ME A ONE-POUND
BASKET AND TOLD ME
I COULD FILL IT WITH
ANYTHING I WANTED.

"SO I WAS WALKING
THE COUNTER, TAKING MY
TIME, WHEN I NOTICED
THIS STRANGE LIGHT
COMING FROM BENEATH
A CURTAIN AT THE BACK
OF THE STORE.

BIG BREAK

WRITER: SCOTT
SHYDER ARTIST: RAFAEL
ALBUQUERQUE

COLORS: DAVE MCCOY LETTERS: STEVE WINDS COVER: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE
VARIANT BY JIM LEE EDITOR: MARK BOYLE AMERICAN VAMPIRE CREATED BY SCOTT SHYDER

"I POKED MY HEAD BEHIND
THE CURTAIN TO SEE..."



"I COULDN'T BELIEVE
MY EYES."

"THE GROCER AND HIS WIFE, THEY'D TURNED THE
STORAGE ROOM INTO A MAKE-SHIFT NICKELODEON.
THEY'D SET UP SOME FOLDING CHAIRS, ROLLED
OUT A PIECE OF BUTCHER PAPER FOR A SCREEN."

"...AND ON THAT SCREEN WAS THE MOST AMAZING
SIGHT I'D EVER SEEN. ALL THESE MEN AND WOMEN
MADE OF LIGHT--PICTURES, BUT ALIVE."

"THE PEOPLE ON THE SCREEN,
THEY WERE LOADING THIS ROCKET
INTO A GIANT CANNON, EVERYONE
CHEERING AND COUNTING DOWN."

"AND BY NOW MY FATHER WAS CALLING
ME, TELLING ME IT WAS TIME TO PICK
MY CANDY AND GO."

"BUT I COULDN'T LOOK AWAY,
BECAUSE THE ROCKET, IT WAS
TAKING OFF! FLYING!"

"GOING
HIGHER AND
HIGHER..."

P.E.A.R.E...

I'm
ALIVE...

"ALL THE WAY
TO THE MOON."

3 Days ago...

...AND I GUESS THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

OH COME ON! THAT OLD TRIP TO THE MOON SHORT?

WHAT? IT'S BEAUTIFUL AND FUNNY AND SAD... IT'S A CLASSIC, HATTIE.

BORING!

OKAY, MISS DEMILLE. SO WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST?

FIRST EVER? ROMEO AND JULIET. WITH FLORENCE TURNER. BUT NO ONE KNEW HER NAME BACK THEN. SHE WAS JUST--

THAT VITAGRAPH GIRL.

BUT ONCE THE MOVIE ENDED, EVERYONE IN THE THEATER STARTED ASKING WHO SHE WAS. AND THAT, MY DEAR, WAS WHEN I KNEW I WANTED TO BE IN THE MOVIES.

MR. HAMILTON IS ON THE SET!

LOOK AT THAT DOG ON HIS ARM, PEARL. HE'S TOO PRETTY FOR HER.

HE'S TOO PRETTY PERIOD.

THEY SAY HE'S GOT A LITTLE SILVER COMB JUST FOR HIS MUSTACHE.

PEARL, YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND...

...BUT YOU KEEP TALKING BAD ABOUT MY FUTURE HUSBAND...

...YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE WORDS.

OKAY, EXTRAS! INTO CHARACTER! ACTION IN 5!

AND REMEMBER--WE WANT TERROR!

TERROR, TAKE NINE. SAY SOMETHING SCARY, WILL YOU?

THE RENT'S DUE TOMORROW.



Later...

UGH, I FEEL LIKE A CANNED TUNA. HOW MANY TIMES CAN THEY DROWN US? I NEED A DRINK. YOU SPORT? I STILL HAVE SOME OF BIG ELLIE'S WINE...

GROSS! SHE MAKES THAT STUFF IN HER BATHTUB, HATTIE, WITH HER FEET. ANYWAY, I BARELY HAVE TIME TO CHANGE.

I WASN'T KIDDING ABOUT THE RENT, YOU KNOW. BUT I CAN COVER YOU IF YOU NEED.

I LOVE YOU, BABY, BUT YOU'RE NOT WORKING THREE JOBS TO COVER YOUR DEADBEAT ROOMIE.

SPEAKING OF DEADBEATS.

HE'S BACK AGAIN? THIS IS THE THIRD DAY IN A ROW!

WELL ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. IF HE'S HERE TOMORROW, I'M GOING TO SAY SOMETHING.

WAIT, WHAT IF HE'S A SEX FIEND OR SOMETHING?

THEN I'LL BE SURE TO GIVE HIM YOUR NUMBER.

That night...

NOK
NOK

Hi,
BOB.

BUSY TONIGHT,
PEARLY. GOING TO BE
A LATE ONE.

SMOKES
HERE! NICKEL
A PACK--!

I'LL
TAKE TWO
OF THOSE
AND ONE
OF YOU!

HA, HA.
CUTE.

CIGARS: CIGARETTES

Dawn.



...JUST EIGHT
MORE HOURS,
PEARL. YOU
ARE A
WARRIOR--A
WARRIOR.

SO AM I GOING
FOUR FOR FOUR
HERE?

OH, HEY,
HENRY. COME
AGAIN?



WELL, I'VE
ASKED YOU FOR
COFFEE THREE
TIMES.

AND SO FAR,
I'VE COME UP WITH
THREE STRAIGHT
STRIKEOUTS. SO HOW
ABOUT IT, YOU WANT
TO GRAB A CUP?



I'M SORRY
BUT I HAVE TO RUN
TO WORK. I'M ON
THE MORNING SHIFT
AT THE HAPPY EGG.
OVER ON
SUNSET?

I KNOW
IT. I'LL WALK
YOU.

THAT'S
OKAY,
REALLY.



PEARL, IT'S JUST
A WALK. SOME FRIENDLY
CONVERSATION. I'M
NOT SWINGING FOR THE
FENCES HERE. I'M
BUNTING. LET A MAN
BUNT, OKAY?



SAGE

...AND AFTER THAT BAND DISSOLVED, I TRAVELED FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS, RIDING THE RAILS--

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. I'M WALKING WITH AN ACTUAL HOBO.

I PREFER THE TERM "GENTLEMAN WAYFARER."

OKAY, NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO TELL ME SOMETHING SURPRISING ABOUT YOU.

THERE ISN'T MUCH TO TELL.

OH, COME ON. YOU'VE GOT SOME KICK TO YOU, I CAN TELL.

NO OFFENSE...

...BUT WHY ARE YOU SO INTERESTED? I MEAN, I SEE YOU UP THERE EVERY NIGHT. YOU'VE GOT GIRLS ALL OVER YOU, EAGER, BEAUTIFUL GIRLS.

OKEY DOKEY. FORGET I ASKED.

ALL RIGHT SSOHW? I HAVE A TATTOO.

IT'S NOTHING BIG. JUST A LITTLE ONE. A BLACK SUNFLOWER. MY FATHER RAISES THEM ON OUR FARM.

SO... WHERE IS IT?

HEY, BABE RUTH, YOU'RE BUNTING, REMEMBER?

I USED TO HIDE IN THE BLACK PETALS WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL--IMAGINING UP ALL SORTS OF DIFFERENT LIVES FOR MYSELF.

ANYWAY, HATTIE AND I WERE DRINKING AND SHE DARED ME AND I GUESS I JUST WANTED SOMETHING TO REMIND ME OF HOME. IT WAS STUPID.

LISTEN, I'M HEADED OUT TO THE BEACH FOR THE FOURTH. I'D BE HONORED IF YOU AND YOUR SUNFLOWER TATTOO WOULD JOIN ME.

IF I DO, WILL YOU TELL ME SOME GOOD HOBO STORIES? I MEAN REALLY, REALLY SPICY ONES?

WHAT'S STUPID ABOUT IT? NOW, IF THE ACTING DOESN'T PAN OUT, YOU CAN JUST GET A COUPLE MORE TATTOOS AND JOIN THE CIRCUS. VERY PRACTICAL.

WELL, A GIRL'S GOT TO HAVE A BACKUP PLAN, RIGHT?

SPEC



THANK YOU, MR. HAMILTON.

OH COME NOW.
YOU'RE MY PRINCESS,
M'LADY. CALL ME CHASE.
AND YOU ARE...

LIGHTS!

PEARL.
PEARL JONES. I'M
YOUR SLAVE. I MEAN I
PLAY YOUR SLAVE, WHICH
YOU CAN TELL, OBVIOUSLY,
BY MY COSTUME, AND
I'M GOING TO STOP
TALKING NOW.

I PREFER
"DEATHLY PALE,"
ACTUALLY.

OH, I THINK
YOU MAKE A FINE
PRINCESS OF ATLANTIS.
BUT YOU KNOW, IT IS
YOU WHO BRINGS
DOWN THE KINGDOM.

APOLOGY ACCEPTED.
YOU KNOW, I LIKE YOU.
YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING
SPECIAL ABOUT YOU--A
QUALITY. B.D. IS THROWING
A PARTY AT HIS PLACE
TONIGHT, OUT ON
THE BLUFFS.

B.D., AS
IN B.D. BLOCH,
THE PRODUCER
OF THE MOVIE?

WOW.

MOVIE
MAGIC,
DEAR.

GOOD.
BRIGHTEN,
BRIGHTEN... SHE
STILL LOOKS THAT
SAME SICKLY
PALE!

YOU CATCH ME
WITH YOUR SISTER
IN OUR CLAMHELL
OF A BED, HELL
HATH NO FURY, AND
SO ON.

WELL I APOLOGIZE
IN ADVANCE FOR KILLING
YOU, PRINCE CHASE, AND
EVERYBODY ELSE, TOO.

HERE, THE
ADDRESS. I WANT YOU TO
MEET HIM. IF MY INSTINCTS ARE
CORRECT, HE'LL GOBBLE
YOU RIGHT UP.



WILL YOU
COME ON
ALREADY?

I'M
PUTTING
ON MY
FACE!

YOU
GALS
SURE DO
CLEAN UP
NICE.

WELL, WELL, CREEPY
COWBOY MAN. YOU KNOW, I UNDER-
STAND THAT THE GIANT SIGN ON THE
GATE CAN BE EASY TO MISS, BUT THIS
PLACE, IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE
FOR WOMEN ONLY.

OH, YOU
LOVE IT.

COME
AGAIN?



ADMIT IT. YOU OLD BIRDS
LOVE HAVING A COCK IN
YOUR HENHOUSE.

LISTEN, I
DON'T KNOW WHICH POOR
GIRL YOU'RE SHACKED UP
WITH, BUT--

I AIN'T SHACKED UP WITH
ANYONE, DOLLY. I JUST LIKE
YOUR CARD. MY DANCE
CARD IS OPEN.

I'M SWOONING. WHY DON'T
YOU TAKE OFF THAT HAT
AND LET ME SEE WHAT I'VE
WON. I'M GUESSING YOU'VE
GOT A CERTAIN DASHING
ELEPHANT-MAN LOOK
ABOUT YOU?

OH, IT'S
WORSE.
MUCH, MUCH
WORSE...



...BUT I'M
PRETTY ON THE
INSIDE.



007, WHY ARE THE
JERKS ALWAYS
THE CUTES
ONE?

LOOK, JUST
DON'T BE HERE
TOMORROW. OR I
REALLY WILL CALL
SOMEONE.

THE
SHERIFF?



THE SHERIFF,
EXACTLY, AND SHE'LL
RUN YOU OUT OF TOWN
BEFORE YOU KNOW
WHAT HIT YOU.

SHE'LL RUN ME
OUT OF TOWN, HA HA!
YOU KNOW WHAT? YOU
GOT SPUNK, GIRLIE. SO
I'LL LET YOU IN ON A
LITTLE SECRET...



B.D. BLOCH'S PARTIES? THEY AIN'T
ANY FUN AT ALL. NO, IF I WERE
YOU, I'D PASS ON HIS LITTLE
JAMBORES TONIGHT.

WOW,
AND YOU
EAVESDROP,
TOO... SO I
TAKE IT YOU
AND "B.D."
ARE GOOD
FRIENDS?



MORE LIKE OLD ACQUAINTANCES.
ACTUALLY, I'M JUST IN TOWN TO
FINISH A BIT OF BUSINESS WITH
THE OLD COOT.

AND BELIEVE ME,
HONEY, HIS GET-TOGETHERS--
BUNCH OF CHEESE-SNIFFING
EU-RO-PEANS DRINKING WITH THEIR
PINKIES OUT. WHY DON'T YOU STAY
HERE? I'LL SHOW YOU A REAL PARTY!



THANKS, BUT I HAPPEN TO LIKE
DRINKING WITH MY PINKIE OUT.

OKAY I'M
READY TO--
OOOH. HI.



REMEMBER
WHAT I SAID ABOUT
TOMORROW.

SUIT
YOURSELF...

"BUT YOU'RE GOING TO BE KICKING YOURSELF IN THE MORNING..."

GEEZ,
IT'S LIKE A
MUSEUM IN
HERE!



FUNNY,
FOR A BIG-TIME
MOVIE PRODUCER
THE GUY DOESN'T
HAVE ANY MOVIE
MEMORABILIA
AROUND.

SURE HE DOES!
THERE'S HAROLD LLOYD
BY THE BAR, AND OVER THERE'S
LOUISE BROOKS. OOH, AND
THERE'S LON CHANEY BEHIND
THE ICE SCULPTURE. STARS
UPON STARS... I'VE DIED AND
GONE TO HEAVEN!

AND JUST IN CASE
OLD B.D. WAVES HIS
MAGIC WAND AND
MAKES YOU A BIG
STAR TONIGHT AND
I NEVER SEE YOU
AGAIN, I JUST
WANT TO SAY
THANKS.

THANKS FOR
WHAT?

BECAUSE
YOU DOPE,
YOU
INSPIRE ME, YOU
REALLY DO.

YOU'VE GOT THIS
DREAM AND YOU
NEVER GIVE UP.
YOU'RE SO
TOUGH, PEARL.

TOUGH? I TAKE THE 9
CAR DOWNTOWN
EVERY NIGHT TO
GET TO THE
CLUB...

"...IT PASSES RIGHT BY THE
UNION PACIFIC TICKET OFFICE.
AND I'M TELLING YOU..."



"...THERE ISN'T A SINGLE NIGHT THAT I
DON'T THINK ABOUT GOING INSIDE THAT
STATION AND BUYING A TICKET HOME.

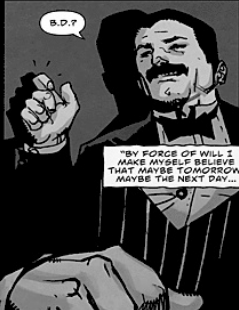
"BUT EVERY DAY I TRY TO
REMEMBER THE SMALL
GOOD THINGS THAT HAVE
HAPPENED ALREADY."





"MEETING YOU,
HAT, FOR ONE."

"THE WAY THE SUN FEELS ON
MY SKIN. THAT WEIRD, SWEET
SOUND THE PALM TREES
MAKE OUTSIDE OUR BALCONY."



B.D.?

"BY FORCE OF WILL I
MAKE MYSELF BELIEVE
THAT MAYBE TOMORROW,
MAYBE THE NEXT DAY..."



LET ME
PRESENT,
MISS PEARL
JONES.



"WE'LL GET TO BE A PART
OF SOMETHING SPECIAL."



PLEASURE
TO MEET...ALL
OF YOU.



I JUST WANT
TO SAY WHAT
AN HONOR IT
IS TO MEET
YOU, MR.
BLOCH.

I'VE BEEN A
FAN OF YOUR
FILMS FOR
YEARS, EVER
SINCE I WAS
A LITTLE
GIRL.



OH,
THAT
CAN'T
BE--

TRUE? IT IS,
MY GIRL. BUT
IMPOSSIBLE TO
IGNORE IS ALL THIS
NOISE ABOUT THE
SO-CALLED "TALKIES."
HAVE YOU HEARD
OF THESE?



FILMS WITH
SYNCHRONIZED
SOUND?

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?



SOON, VERY SOON,
YOU WILL BE ABLE TO
HEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME
THE VOICES OF AMERICA'S
BIGGEST MOVIE STARS.
HEAR THEM TALKING AND
SINGING, *BEGGING* FOR
YOUR ATTENTION.



AND I WILL
MAKE THESE
FILMS FOR YOU, MISS
PEARL... BUT, YOU
SEE, THE BITTER
IRONY OF THE
SITUATION...



PLEASE...
PLEASE
DON'T...



...IS THAT I
MYSELF DON'T
WANT TO HEAR
ANYTHING YOU
HAVE TO SAY.



To be
Continued...

BAD BLOOD

WRITER: STEPHEN KING

ARTIST: RAFAEL ALBUQUERQUE

COLORS: DAVE MCCAIG

LETTERS: STEVE WANDS



I ONLY
WROTE ONE
NOVEL IN MY
LIFE--

--"BAD
BLOOD"--

--BUT THAT
WAS ENOUGH TO
MAKE ME RICH, AND THE
IRONY? MOST OF IT
WAS TRUE. MY NAME IS
WILL BUNTING, AND
I WAS THERE.

THREE
CHEERS FOR
JAMES BOOK OF
THE PINKERTON
AGENCY!

WHEN YOUR
GRANDCHILDREN ASK,
YOU CAN TELL THEM THAT
THE MOST NOTORIOUS
MURDERER AND BANK-THIEF
IN THE AMERICAN WEST WAS
CAPTURED RIGHT HERE, IN
SIDEWINDER, BY THIS
COURAGEOUS KNIGHT
OF LAW AND
ORDER!

DAMNIT
TO HELL...

HIP-HIP-
HOORAY!
HIP-HIP-
HOORAY!

HANGING'S
TOO GOOD FOR
SKINNER SWEET!
BURN HIM
ALIVE!

HANG
HIM!



LET'S GO GET THAT
GANDY-EATING
WHOREMASTER
HUNG.

I'M GOING
INSIDE. THIS
SUN IS KILLING
ME. I HAVE
VERY FAIR
SKIN, YOU
KNOW.

I BETTER
SPELL DEPUTY
GAMILLO.

EVER HEARD
HOSS-BALLS
POP ON A BONFIRE
AT A GELDING
PARTY?

THAT'S
WHAT A
MAN'S HEAD
SOUNDS
LIKE WHEN
HE GETS
BURNED
ALIVE.

I WANT YOU TO
KNOW, SENOR CAMILLO,
BECAUSE I DOUBT YOU'LL
ACTUALLY HEAR IT.

YOU'LL FEEL IT,
THOUGH.

THAT'S
ENOUGH,
SWEET.

WELL, WELL,
THE HERO OF THE
DAY. CAN I GET YOUR
AUTOGRAPH?

GO GET
YOURSELF
SOMETHING
TO EAT, FELIX.
BEFORE THOSE
WRITERS
GOBBLE IT
ALL.

I DON'T WANT NONE O' THAT, BUT
HOW ABOUT THE PEPPERMINT
STICK IN MY HAT?

HOW
ABOUT YOU
SHUT UP
AND TAKE A
NAP?

I'LL SLEEP WHEN I'M DEAD.
C'MON, PINK--MY SWEET TOOTH
IS DRIVING ME CRAZY.

WHERE'S
RONNIE JECKS AND
THE BLACKMOUTH
TWIN? TELL ME AND
I JUST MIGHT UNPIN
THAT CANDY
FOR YOU.

THAT'S
FOR ME TO
KNOW...



"...AND YOU TO
FIND OUT!"

WHAT IF THE
CRASH KILLS 'EM ALL,
RONNIE? WHAT IF IT
KILLS SKINNERT? WHAT IF
THE ENGINEER SEES AND
THROWS ON THE
BRAKES?

BY THE TIME
YONDER TRAIN COMES
AROUND THAT CURVE,
JESUS CHRIST HIMSELF
COULDN'T STOP IT. AS FOR
THE BOSS, HE'S TOO
TOUGH TO DIE. AND
REMEMBER...

NO
WITNESSES!

LAWMEN FROM KANSAS TO ARIZONA TRIED TO NAIL SKINNER SWEET, BUT IT TOOK THE PINKERTON AGENCY TO, PARDON MY PUN, BRING HIM TO BOOK.

IT WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS OPERATION THE AGENCY HAS EVER UNDERTAKEN, AND I DID THE PLANNING PERSONALLY. WASN'T CHEAP, EITHER, BUT PERCY KNOWS WHEN TO OPEN THE PURSE STRINGS... PERCY? PURSE STRINGS. heh-heh.

MORE CHAMPAGNE!

MORE CHAMPAGNE, ABSOLUTELY!

NEED MORE SUN-CREAM, DAMN SKIN'S PRACTICALLY BAKING OFF ME!



HE MAKES IT SOUND LIKE I WAS CAPTURED IN THE BIGGEST BATTLE SINCE SHILOH CHURCH INSTEAD OF SLEEPING IT OFF IN SOME WHORE'S SPERM-HAMMOCK.

WANT TO SET EM STRAIGHT, PINK?

NOPE. FINCH PAYS MY SALARY, AND PERCY PAYS M'S.

AND ALL THEIR ROBBERIES ARE NICE AND LEGAL.

BLOWING THE BALLS OFF SPECIAL AGENT HENRY FINCH AFTER I ESCAPE IS GOING TO BE MY PLEASURE.

YOU LOOK DOUBTFUL, SPECIAL AGENT BOOK.

NOT AT ALL. EVERY HIGHWAYMAN ESCAPES IN THE END: THROUGH A TRAPDOOR AND STRAIGHT INTO HELL. YOURS IS WAITING IN NEW MEXICO.

AFTER FINCH, I'M THINKING ABOUT DOUBLIN' BACK TO SIDEWINDER AND KILLING THE GREASER WHO PEACHED ME UP. YOUR AMIGO FELIX'S FATHER, WASN'T IT? MAYBE I'LL SEE HOW MUCH OF HIS REWARD MONEY I CAN STUFF DOWN HIS THROAT BEFORE HE CHOKES.

FOR A MAN TAKEN DRUNK IN HIS UNDERWEAR, YOU'RE WELL INFORMED.

ABOUT MANY THINGS, PINK. I KEEP MY BAR TO THE GROUND.



"LET ME HAVE MY CANDY AND I'LL TELL YOU WHERE THE LOOT FROM THE BAKERSVILLE LARK'S TUCKED AWAY. YOU'D GET A NICE BONUS...OR HELL, KEEP IT FOR YOURSELF. BUY THAT LITTLE FIANCES OF YOURS SOME PRETTY LITTLE SILK SKIMMIES."

"HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT--?"

ELLA LANGUMT TOLDJA, I KNOW A LOT. AND I COULD TELL IF I GOT TO SATISFY MY SWEET TOOTH, THAT IS.



WE GOT ALMOST \$20,000 FROM THAT BAKERSVILLE BANK. YOUR BOSS'D FILL HIS PANTS ON BOTH SIDES IF YOU DROPPED THAT NEWS ON HIM.



THANKEE KINDLY, PINK.

NAME'S BOOK.

I THINK I'LL STICK TO PINK. THAT BAKERSVILLE JOB WENT SMOOTH AS SILK TO START WITH...



Bakersville, Colorado, 6 Months Ago.

"THE VAULT WAS LOADED,
PINK--MINING COMPANY
PAYROLL MONEY. WE HAD
TWO BOYS WITH THE
HORSES AND ANOTHER
ACROSS THE STREET,
STANDING LOOKOUT."



"I SAW NO REASON WHY
THE BOYS SHOULDN'T HAVE
A LITTLE FUN WITH THE GALS..."



"RONNIE JEEKS
WAS MORE...ER..."

"...CATHOLIC TASTES."

"IT WAS SUPPOSED TO
BE THE GODDAMN LOAN
OFFICER'S DAY OFF."







WHAT THE--?
BRAKE!!!





HELLO, BOYS!
JUST LIKE GOD
PLANNED IT! AND
WHO'S GOD?

YOU ARE,
BOSS! WHAT
ABOUT
BOOK?

DON'T
WORRY...





SAY
GOODBYE,
FUCKWAD.

PLEASE...
NO...I'LL DO
ANYTHING...

HOLD
UP, SEEKIE,
HE'S MINE. I
PROMISED
MYSELF I'D
BLOW OFF
HIS BA--



I'LL KILL
YOU, YOU
BASTARD!

GO ON!
PUT ONE IN
HIS HEAD!



DON'T TELL
ME YOU DON'T WANT
TO! NO? OKAY...



NO!
BOSS!

"WHAT I SAW NEXT WAS
SURELY COLORED BY MY
IMAGINATION AS WELL AS BY
THE DYING HUES OF THAT
TERRIBLE DAY'S SUNSET..."



"...BUT WHAT
I SAW IS
MORE REAL
THAN ANY
DREAM OR
MEMORY."

LOOKIT
OLD MAN PERCY! HE'S
MIGHTY BOLD!

I THINK I'VE
HAD ENOUGH OF
YOUR SHIT, MR.
SWEET.

AND I'VE
HAD ENOUGH
OF YOURS,
PERCY. SHOOT
HIM, BOYS.



YOU'RE
DEAD! YOU
CAN'T!

I'M
NOT AND
I CAN!



"I KNEW I WOULD
WRITE THIS. I HAD TO
WRITE THIS, EVEN IF
NO ONE BELIEVED IT."





IS HE--?

JUST GRAZED
HIM! THANK
GOD!



WHERE
THE HELL IS
PERCY?



HE'S RUINED
EVERYTHING! HE
WAS SUPPOSE TO BE
AN EXAMPLE OF WHAT
HAPPENS TO PEOPLE
WHO STEAL FROM
MY BANK AND MY
RAILROAD!

CLUB

I ONLY
WISH YOU
COULD FEEL
IT, YOU
MURDERING
ASSHOLE...

...NOT
EXACTLY
THE WAY WE
PLANNED
IT...

...BUT
DONE IS DONE.
REST IN PEACE,
SKINNER
SWEET.

"I STARTED WRITING
THAT VERY NIGHT, AND I
THINK I KNEW TWO
THINGS EVEN THEN: THAT
WHAT I WROTE COULD
ONLY BE PUBLISHED AS
FICTION..."

...AND
SKINNER
SWEET'S STORY
WASN'T OVER
BUT JUST
BEGINNING.

1880

1909

To be
Continued...

1925



EDITORIAL BY

SCOTT SNYDER

A few nights ago, I reread one of my favorite Stephen King stories, a short piece called

"The Boogeyman" about a father who's worried he might have murdered his three infant children. I've read the story at least five times. I've even taught the story in a writing class. But it still scares me. And so lying there in bed, I started thinking about how many times I've found myself in exactly that situation over the course of my life, from childhood to now — awake late at night, a Stephen King book on my chest — scared shitless.

So how does he do it? Why are his stories so damn scary?

Honestly, I don't know. But I'll give you my best guess, which is that he turns the things we trust the most — the things we love — against us. Our first car, that candy-apple red beauty, Christine; our beloved family dog, Cujo; dear old dad, Jack Torrance; or our cute little four-year-old son, Gage (PET SEMATARY in my opinion is the scariest book of all time). Again and again Stephen King takes the things that make us who we are, our safest, most precious things, and makes them want to kill us.

Which is why, I think, he was so attracted to the world of *American Vampire* — my new monthly series for Vertigo (for which Steve — and he makes you call him Steve, I'm not that much of an asshole — has penned five awesome issues). Because at its heart, the series is very much about us, Americans, and what we hold dear — cowboys and starlets, highways and old dusty towns — and what makes us who we are. The good, the admirable, the heroic — and the monstrous.

Of course, it's about vampires, too. Lots of vampires, old kinds and new kinds (no sparkly ones, though).

The central question of the series is this: What if vampires, like all creatures, have secretly evolved over time? Meaning, what if every once in a while, when a vampire turns someone new, from somewhere new, the blood makes something new: a new kind of vampire — with new powers, new strengths, new weaknesses? A new bloodline...

The stars of the series are a guy named Skinner Sweet, and a young woman named Pearl Jones. Skinner (the protagonist of Steve's story) is a wily, sociopathic outlaw, a Hellraiser of the 1880s, who gets infected with vampire blood and does become a new kind of vampire — the first American Vampire, tougher, meaner, born of the American West, with a new bag of tricks and a new attitude. Pearl (the star of my story) is an actress struggling to make it in the silent film industry of 1920s Hollywood, who crosses paths with Skinner after an unfortunate night out on the town. Together, Skinner and Pearl represent the start of this new vampire bloodline that the series will track through different decades of the 20th century, revealing all sorts of dark secrets along the way — secrets about human and vampire history alike.

One last thing: I can't say enough good things about the amazing, amazing Rafael Albuquerque (who is himself like some new mutant breed of super-artist). We've become genuine friends over the last year, developing the series, and there's honestly hardly a day that goes by we don't talk ideas, brainstorm, shoot things around. One of the things I can promise you is that we'll be trying very, very hard, to make *American Vampire* something dark and fun and worth the price of admission.

Hope you'll pick it up... Maybe read it in bed, late at night...

—Scott Snyder

HOT LIST

AMERICAN VAMPIRE #1

Witness the birth of a brand new species of vampire in this new ongoing series that begins with five extra-sized issues featuring back-to-back stories by exciting new writer Scott Snyder, artist Rafael Albuquerque and the master of horror himself, Stephen King! Variant cover by Jim Lee.

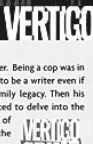


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0310

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UNKNOWN SOLDIER #18 • THE UNWRITTEN #11
NORTHLANDERS: VOL. 3 BLOOD IN THE SNOW

GRAPHIC COLLECTIONS

GREEK STREET VOL. 1
BLOOD CALLS FOR BLOOD

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